

Just Add Water Book 1: A New Tail

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Summary: Elijah Cooper was at sea with his family when a storm struck. The storm destroyed the boat, and he was lost at sea. One thing that saved him was his power. Elijah happened to be gifted with powerful Hydro-Kinesis. His powers kept him alive for months while he drifted at sea, until he found himself on the beach of Mako Island; having been pulled from the drink by a mermaid.

## 1. Chapter 1: An Interesting Tail

### Chapter 1: An Interesting Tail

It felt like an amusement park ride. That's how badly this storm was tossing around the Cooper family boat. They had just left port in Vancouver last week on their way to Indonesia, where Elijah's parents were supposed to conduct a water study and fish population count along the coast.

Elijah had been on boats his entire life, but this was the worst storm he had ever seen. Equipment was flying everywhere and Elijah and his mom were scrambling trying to secure it all, while his dad was at the helm of the ship, trying to steer it against the storm. Once everything was secured, Elijah went up on deck to find his dad. But lightning struck and an explosion rocked the ship. Something hard connected with the side of his head, and the world went dark as he fell overboard.

Elijah's world was spinning. Flashes and pictures faded in and out in his head. Faces and people and places that seemed familiar. But he didn't know why. He kept tossing and turning for what seemed like years. Then out of the blue, an arm grabbed him and life shot back into him like a lightning bolt. His eyes shot open and he gasped for air. Only there was no air to be had. With his eyes open he found himself underwater amidst a coral reef. He struggled, but whatever it was that was holding onto him held on hard. His strength faded and he stopped struggling. He could feel himself being pulled through the

water. Before he passed out, he glimpsed what was pulling him along. Long brown hair. A slim feminine form. A long fish tail.

'Mermaidâ€|' was Elijah's last conscious thought before he passed out completely

Consciousness returned to him slowly. First was the bright light of the midday sun leaching through his eyelids. Then the sand beneath his back. Then the sound of waves crashing in his ears. He coughed and water sprayed out of his mouth. He sat up and looked around. He was on a tropical beach with a jungle behind him and the endless ocean in front of him. But that's not what had his attention when he managed to pull himself together. There was a girl standing on the beach a few feet to his right. When she noticed he was awake, she stepped closer and knelt next to him.

"Are you alright?" she asked

She spoke in a distinct Australian accent, which gave him a pretty good guess about where he was.

"I'm alright. Just feeling a little out of it." said Elijah

"You're not from around here, are you?" the girl asked

"How can you tell?" asked Elijah

"Your accent. Is it American?" she asked

"Canadian actually." said Elijah with a smile

He tried to stand up, but halfway up his knees buckled and he hit the sand.

"Are you sure you're alright? You must have been in the water a long time. Just look at your clothes." she said

Elijah stopped and looked down. His clothes were torn and shredded and rotted away. His pants had been reduced to shorts and his shirt had gaping holes in them.

"You're right. Wow." said Elijah

"Just how long were you in the water?" asked the girl

Good question. But when he tried to remember, a sharp pain shot through his head. He clutched his head in both hands and groaned in pain as he tried to remember.

"Are you alright?" cried the girl

But when she noticed she had put her hand on Elijah's wet shoulder unconsciously, she recoiled and wiped her hand on her shirt. Elijah raised an eyebrow, but didn't press the issue.

"I don't think I got your name." said Elijah

"It's Cleo. Cleo Sertori. What's your name?" said the girl

"I'm Elijah." said Elijah

"That's a very unusual name, Elijah. What's your last name?" asked Cleo

Elijah was quickly struck by another headache.

"What's wrong?" asked Cleo

"I'm having some trouble remembering some things. Whenever I try to remember certain things, it's like a spike is being driven through my head." explained Elijah

Cleo winced in sympathy for his pain.

"Okay, what can you remember?" asked Cleo

"Why don't you ask me some simple questions, and if I can answer them, I will." said Elijah

"Sounds good." said Cleo

She handed him a towel to dry off and settled down on the beach next to him.

"What is your favourite colour?" she asked

"Blue."

"Favourite sport?"

"Hockey."

"Do you have a girlfriend?"

"Yes."

"What's her name?"

In a flash, Elijah could see her face in his mind's eye. He could see gorgeous blue eyes and a radiant smile. He felt so driven to remember that the pain from his headache was excruciating. He nearly passed out, but a slap across the face snapped him out of his attempt at remembering and the pain quickly faded.

"I am so sorry I slapped you. You were in pain and I panicked and I didn't know what to do." Cleo rambled on, her eyes wide

Elijah stopped her with a hand on her shoulder.

"There's no need to apologize. I should be thanking you. That slap was exactly what I needed." said Elijah

Cleo let out a sigh of relief. She rose to her feet and took out her cellphone.

"No more questions for now. You can come with me back to my house." said Cleo

She stepped away and made a call on her cellphone. She had her back

to him, giving Elijah a moment of privacy. He thought about his current circumstances. He held out his hand and he drew water from the beach and from the air. He formed it into a spherical shape. He stretched it into a cylinder, then contorted it into a corkscrew before releasing it to fall into the sand. He smiled, satisfied. It was good to see that his use of his powers seemed to be intact. He turned to see Cleo, and she was just finishing her call.

"Thanks Lewis. You're a life saver." she said, before hanging up and returning her phone to her pocket

She turned around and Elijah stood up.

"Lewis will be here to pick us up soon." said Cleo

"Thank you again for all this. Do you live near here?" asked Elijah

"Well sort of. I live on the Gold Coast of Australia. Right now we're on an island, Mako Island, which isn't far off the coast." said Cleo

"Australia, huh. I can't remember leaving the Northern Hemisphere." said Elijah

"Well you would have had to be in the water for a very, very long time to get here from there by ocean currents. It's impossible." said Cleo

'Not when you can do what I can do.' thought Elijah, 'My powers must have kept me alive while I was underwater.'

"Hey Cleo,"

"Yes?"

"What are you doing all by yourself on an island that is far enough from the coast that you need to call for a ride?" asked Elijah

Elijah noticed how she tensed up at that. She was on the defensive, and Elijah could guess that the next thing out of her mouth would be a lie.

"Well Lewis came here with me earlier, but he had an errand to run, so I told him to just come get me later." said Cleo a little too quickly

"That makes sense." said Elijah, nodding

Cleo nodded in return. Elijah could tell she was hiding something.

"There's Lewis' boat." said Cleo, pointing toward an incoming shape on the horizon

The boat arrived on the beach a couple of minutes later. The blonde boy, Lewis, beached the boat and climbed out.

"Lewis, this is Elijah. I found him washed up on the beach." said

Cleo

"Nice to meet you, Elijah." said Lewis

"Same to you, Lewis." replied Elijah

"Well hop in, and we'll be home soon." said Lewis

"Lewis, can you help me into the boat?" asked Cleo

Cleo glanced at the water, then back at him. Lewis looked confused a moment, before he had an epiphany moment.

"Oh! Right." exclaimed Lewis

He swept Cleo off her feet and carried her into the boat.

"Thank you, Lewis." said Cleo, once she was sitting comfortably in the small boat

Lewis pushed off the shore and joined them in the boat. He started the small, 15 horsepower motor and they were on their way. It wasn't long before they were docking in the harbour. Once Lewis had tied the boat up, they began the walk to Cleo's house. Cleo opened the front door and the two boys followed her inside. A middle aged man stepped into the room to greet them.

"Welcome home Cleo." said the man

"Hi Dad." replied Cleo

"Good to see you, Lewis." said Cleo's Dad

"Hi Mr. Sertori." said Lewis

"And who is your new friend?" asked Cleo's Dad

"I'm Elijah." said Elijah

"Elijah, it's nice to meet you." said Cleo's Dad

"It's nice to meet you too, Mr. Sertori." said Elijah

"Dad, can Elijah stay here for a little while?" asked Cleo

"Doesn't he have a home of his own?" asked Cleo's Dad

"Cleo found me washed up on the beach on Mako Island." said Elijah

"He can't even remember his last name. It could take a long time for him to find his family." said Cleo

"I don't know about this, Cleo." said Cleo's Dad

"I would be willing to work to earn room and board." said Elijah

"Oh alright." said Cleo's Dad

"I'll lend you some of my clothes. They should fit you." said

Lewis

"Thank you, Lewis." said Elijah

Lewis nodded, and left the house.

"I'll get you settled into the guest room." said Cleo

"Hold on, Cleo. You need to do the dishes." said Cleo's Dad

"Where's Kim?" asked Cleo

"She's at a friend's house." said Cleo's Dad

Cleo looked to be on edge. She was beginning to look as though she was backed into a corner.

"I'll do them, Mr. Sertori." said Elijah

Cleo started to calm down.

"I appreciate the offer, Elijah, but it's important that Cleo learn responsibility. I can't have you taking over all her chores." said Cleo's Dad

"I'm not going to do all her chores. Just the water based ones." said Elijah

He kept looking at Cleo's Dad, but he could feel her shocked stare burning into his head.

"Why only the chores to do with water?" asked Cleo's Dad

Elijah glanced at Cleo. She looked scared now.

"Well, you know how girls are about skin care. They're always afraid that things like washing dishes will dry out their skin." said Elijah

"Well- um... ah alright then. I'll leave you to it then. I have some shopping I need to do." said Cleo's Dad, and he left as well

Cleo shut the door, and spun to face Elijah.

"What do you think you're doing?" she demanded

"Covering for you. What did you think I was doing?" replied Elijah

There it was again. Cleo had done a 180 and was back on the defensive.

"Look whatever is going on with you is clearly more than just hydrophobia. But I'm not going to insist that you tell me what's going on." said Elijah

"Well I'm not- wait, what?" asked Cleo

"You just convinced your Dad to let someone you don't know anything about live in your house. Your Dad clearly doesn't know about this

secret of yours, and I won't pressure you to share it with me. That said, if you did decide to tell me, then it would make it much easier to cover for you. And it goes without saying that I would take the secret to my grave." said Elijah

"That's... good to know." said Cleo

"Also, as a show of good faith, I am going to share my secret with you." said Elijah

Cleo was intrigued. She followed Elijah over to the sink.

"Observe." he said

Elijah reached out a hand, and the water rose out of the sink with all the dishes in it. The water started swirling and churning rapidly. Elijah made a gesture with his free hand and a ball of murky, gross water separated from the main mass of water. He directed it into the sink drain and released it. The remaining water was now perfectly clear and still, and all of the dishes were squeaky clean. Elijah plucked the dishes out of the ball one by one, placing them on the drying rack. Once all the dishes were retrieved, he released the water into the sink. But it didn't go down the drain. Instead it floated back into the air, in the shape of a clear tentacle. Elijah looked at Cleo and found that she was intensely focused on the water, and making hand gestures of her own. Once she was done, she released the tentacle into the sink and it went down the drain.

"So we have the same power. Does this mean you're a mermaid too? I mean, I guess you would be a merman." said Cleo

"Uh no, I'm not a merman. Why do youâ€|"

He had a memory flash to back before he passed out underwater. To what he saw.

"I didn't wash up on that beach. You pulled me out. You're a mermaid." said Elijah

"Yes, I am. But you can't tell-

"I told you before, I will take your secret to my grave." said Elijah

Cleo breathed a sigh of relief.

"If you aren't a merman, then how do you have those powers? I didn't get my powers until I became a mermaid." said Cleo

"I don't remember much. All the details are fuzzy, but some pictures are clear. I remember some kind of rocky sea cliff, and a watery cave. But I don't think I got my powers from there. No, my powers just awoke when I nearly drowned." said Elijah

"Do you remember where it is?" asked Cleo

Elijah winced as he hit a block in his memory.

"I'm sorry. Are you okay?" asked Cleo, noticing Elijah's pain

"I'm alright. I'm sure I'll be able to remember eventually. You said you became a mermaid. How did that happen?" asked Elijah

"On Mako Island, there is a pool of water in a volcanic crater. I swam in it as the full moon passed overhead. The water started bubbling, but it wasn't boiling, and little lights started floating up to the sky. The next day, I climbed in the bath and this happened." said Cleo

She ran her hand under the tap for a second, before turning it off again, and a few seconds later her legs locked together as a tail and her clothes were replaced by a scaly bra that matched her tail. She fell over, but Elijah caught her before she could hit the ground.

"Wow, that's really something." said Elijah

Suddenly Cleo froze as she heard the front door open.

"Cleo, I'm back." came Lewis' voice from the front door

Cleo breathed a deep sigh of relief.

"We're over here, Lewis." called Cleo

Lewis caught sight of Cleo.

"So I'm guessing he already knows about you." said Elijah to Cleo

Cleo nodded.

"Of course I know about her. How do you know about her?" asked Lewis

"I trusted him with my secret after he trusted me with his." said Cleo

"What secret?" asked Lewis

"Can you dry me off first?" asked Cleo

Lewis nodded and went for a dish towel, but Elijah simply summoned all the water that Cleo had used to transform into a small sphere which floated above his hand.

"I think that answers everyone's questions." said Elijah, before sending the water down the drain

"Fascinating." said Lewis

Now that Cleo was dry, her tail disappeared and her normal clothes reappeared. She stood up and brushed herself off.

"So he knows about you. Does he know about Rikki and Emma?" asked Lewis

"Who are Rikki and Emma? Friends of yours? Mermaids?" asked Elijah

"Both. I'll introduce you to them soon." said Cleo

"Can't wait." said Elijah

"Right, here are some clothes." said Lewis, and he handed Elijah a duffle bag

"Thank you, Lewis." said Elijah

He took the duffle bag into the bathroom, and when he emerged a few minutes later, all cleaned up and dressed in fresh clothes. He put the duffle bag in the guest room, and re-joined Cleo and Lewis downstairs. But it wasn't just the two of them anymore. They had been joined by two new girls with blonde hair.

"Rikki, Emma, this is Elijah. Elijah, this is Rikki and Emma." said Cleo

"Well Cleo, as far as creepy new house guests go, you could have done worse." said the girl Cleo had called Rikki

"I'll take that as a compliment." said Elijah

"Elijah knows I'm a mermaid." said Cleo

Emma and Rikki's heads spun to stare at Cleo at sub-whiplash speed.

"What!?" they cried out in unison

"He trusted me with his secret, so I trusted him with mine." said Cleo

"I think you mean our secret." said Emma

"What secret could this guy have that's on par with the truth that we grow fish tails when we touch water?" demanded Rikki

Cleo looked at Elijah.

"You should probably show them before they kill you." she said

Elijah nodded. He put a hand out and focused. A ball of water began to form out of thin air. He grew it to the size of a basketball and floated it over to the blonde mermaids.

"You can touch it. I cranked up the cohesion of the water molecules, so you'd have to touch it for 10 seconds straight to transform." explained Elijah

Emma and Rikki looked at each other nervously, before reaching up to touch it. They pulled their hands back, and after 10 seconds nothing happened. Elijah dissipated the water back into the air.

"See, I told you." said Elijah

"That little trick doesn't make you trustworthy." said Rikki

"I don't expect you to magically trust me. I know I have to earn it."

But let me show you an advantage to keeping me around." said Elijah

He filled a cup with water and set it down on the table.

"Which of you lovely mermaids would like to help me with my demonstration?" asked Elijah

"I will." said Cleo, and she sat down on a chair

Elijah very simply picked up the cup full of water and dumped it on Cleo. But before the others could make an outburst, Elijah held out a hand and the water flew toward him. Within seconds, all the water was floating between Elijah and Cleo. The 10 second mark passed and nothing happened.

"See, your water worries are now greatly decreased." said Elijah

"I will admit, that is pretty handy." said Rikki

"How did you get your powers?" asked Emma

"Well, like I told Cleo earlier, there's a lot I don't remember about my life before she fished me out of the drink, but I think my powers came naturally." said Elijah

"So you really don't remember where you came from?" asked Rikki

"Nope. My first clear memory is of the beach on Mako Island after Cleo saved my life." said Elijah

The sound of keys in a lock came from the front door, and all supernatural talk stopped. The door opened and Cleo's Dad walked in, followed by a younger girl with sandy blonde hair.

"Dad, who is this?" the girl asked

"Kim, this is Elijah. He's going to be staying with us for a while." said Cleo's Dad

"But why?" asked Kim

"He doesn't have a place to stay." explained Cleo's Dad

"And that means he's staying here?" asked Kim

"Yes." said Cleo's Dad, and he walked into the kitchen to put the food away

"I won't forget this." said Kim, glaring at Cleo

"One other thing, Kim. Your services on dish duty are no longer required." said Cleo

Kim's eyes were wide and her mouth open as she stared at her sister. She complained about having to do it, but in truth it earned her \$40+/week. She groaned exasperated and stormed up to her room and slammed the door.

"That was fun." said Rikki

"Let's go to the Juicenet." said Cleo

The other's nodded and they all got up to leave.

"What's the Juicenet?" asked Elijah

"It's this juice bar/wifi cafe where everyone hangs out." said Cleo

"Sounds cool." said Elijah and he followed them out the door.

They hadn't been sitting at their table at Juicenet for 5 minutes when two guys walked up to bother them. Elijah had never seen them before, but the looks of disgust on his new friends' faces told him that these two were not going to be pleasant.

"I see you've found yourselves a new friend." said one of the boys

"Must be fascinating for you to see, Zane. Maybe if you stick around you might learn how to do it yourself." said Rikki

"You're funny." said Zane

"I know." replied Rikki, and gave him one of her radiant, carefree smiles

"C'mon, Zane. Let's just go." said the other boy

"Yeah, alright Nate. I'm sure we can find something better to do." said Zane

The two of them left Juicenet. Elijah looked at Lewis.

"What was that?" asked Elijah

"That was just Nate and Zane. They're annoying, but it's best to just ignore them." explained Lewis

"I see."

"Come on, let's go on the net and see if we can find anything about your past." said Lewis

Elijah nodded and followed the other boy over to the computer, leaving the girls to chat amongst themselves. He sat down next to Lewis, who was at the keyboard.

"Alright. First I'll search your name through missing persons reports." said Lewis

He typed in Elijah's name in the search.

"You should widen the search parameter for time and area. I'm not sure, but I think that I might have fallen into the water far away, and that my power kept me alive until Cleo pulled me out of the water." said Elijah

"Alright, widening search parameters." said Lewis in focused monotone

He hit the search button, and waited for the page to load.

"Elijah isn't a very common name, so as long as someone filed a report I should be able to find some information on you." said Lewis

The page loaded. 0 results found.

"Oh well. It's not the end of the world. There are loads of databases that I can and may have to search." said Lewis

"Don't worry about it. That would have been too easy." said Elijah with a reassuring smile

"How's the search going?" asked Cleo, who had appeared behind them

"Very slowly." said Lewis

"When do you think you will find some results?" asked Cleo

"This could take a while. Maybe you and Elijah should go home." said Lewis

"Yeah you're right. Nearly drowning takes a lot out of you. I should probably get some rest." said Elijah

"Yeah I'm feeling tired too." said Cleo

They both said goodbye to everyone and walked home. Once home, Elijah climbed the stairs to Cleo's guest bedroom, flopped onto the bed and was asleep by the time his head hit the pillow.

## 2. Chapter 2: Shipwrecked

### Chapter 2: Shipwrecked

A/N: Make sure you've read the updated chapter 1 before you read this

Elijah woke up and rolled out of bed. He grunted when he hit the ground and struggled to his feet. He stumbled into the bathroom and got into the shower. It wasn't until the water started running over him that he felt awake and alive. Once finished he climbed out of the shower with a towel around his waist. Smiling, he shook the water out of his hair like a dog; inadvertently spraying Cleo. It seemed that he had forgotten to lock the door, and Cleo had just wandered in.

"I'm sorry, Cleo." said Elijah

Cleo closed the door, and calmly walked to the bathtub and managed to settle in comfortably before her tail formed.

"It's alright, I had to get wet anyways." said Cleo

She seemed to notice his state of dress and turned her head away, blushing.

"I'm used to being the first one in here, so I didn't expect it to be occupied. It won't happen again." said Cleo

"Don't worry about it. But I should probably go. Will you be able to lock the door with your powers, or do you want me to?" asked Elijah

"I got it." said Cleo

Elijah nodded and left the bathroom. He heard a click behind him as the door locked. By the time Cleo was out of the bath, Elijah had already gotten dressed and eaten breakfast. He was sitting on the couch when Lewis walked in.

"Hey, Elijah. Where's Cleo?" asked Lewis

"She's still getting ready. Are you ready to go?" asked Elijah

Lewis waved the pair of fishing poles he was holding in reply.

"I hope you aren't planning on cheating." said Lewis

"Nah, I'd only do that if we were fishing for food. We are fishing for fun." said Elijah, as he patted Lewis on the shoulder

"You two have fun." called Cleo, who had just appeared at the top of the stairs

"We will. I bumped into Rikki before I came over. She said she would be here soon to hang out with you." replied Lewis

"Bye Cleo." said Elijah, and the two boys went out the door

Lewis and Elijah spent the day at Lewis' 'secret fishing spot'. They didn't catch much, but the relaxation was nice. It was dark by the time they got back to Cleo's house.

"Today was fun. I never really had anyone to fish with growing up." said Elijah absentmindedly

"Hey you remembered something." said Lewis as he opened the front door

"I guess I did. I suppose I'll have to just be patient and wait for my memory to return." said Elijah

Lewis made a quick note in his notebook and the two of them stepped inside. They found the girls sitting on the staircase landing, talking amongst themselves. The group exchanged greetings while the boys climbed the stairs to join the girls.

"You'll never guess who Emma found today." said Rikki

"I found the old lady Cleo was telling us about before. Zane was arguing with her down at the marina because her boat's mooring line broke and it crashed into his jet ski." said Emma

"You mean that weird old lady that lives on the boat?" asked Lewis

"Yeah that's her." said Emma

"How do you know her?" asked Rikki

"No, no I don't, I've just heard about her. She lives on that leaky old wreck. No friends, no family; all alone." answered Lewis

"She's the one that seems to know all about the full moon, and our powers, and our tails." said Cleo

"Some people say she's a witch." said Lewis

"And if they said she was an easter bunny, would you believe that?" asked Rikki

"There was a time I didn't believe in mermaids either." replied Lewis

"Sorry, but can you fill me in? I seem to be a little bit out of the loop here." said Elijah

"Right, sorry. A couple months ago, Cleo encountered a strange old woman at the marine park. She seemed to know all about us being mermaids." said Emma

"I had just splashed myself by accident while getting the fish ready for feeding time. The only cloth I could find was soaking wet, and I thought I was doomed for sure. Then there she was. She tossed me a dry towel, and when I had dried myself off, she was gone. Every time she has appeared since then, she has given me valuable information that has turned out to be reliable. Information about our powers, our tails and the full moon." explained Cleo

"What happens with the full moon?" asked Elijah

"When we look at the full moon or its reflection, we go into a state we call 'moonstruck'. We basically lose all inhibitions and become obsessed with the moon, and swimming, and Mako Island. Beyond that, each full moon seems to have different effects. The first time, Emma got moonstruck and once she got wet her tail came out and even though we dried her off completely, it didn't disappear until the moon set. Last time, which was only a few days before we found you, Cleo got moonstruck. But when she got wet she didn't even transform. Instead she went all siren on us and started singing all the time." said Rikki

"That doesn't seem so bad." said Elijah

"It is when she goes and broadcasts her voice on a radio station, entralling every teenage guy in town and bringing them all to her front door, including Lewis. Her Dad flipped out the next morning. The siren voice didn't wear off until the moon set, which happened to be late the next morning. She was in the middle of singing in front of a crowd; and without the Siren voice, Cleo is an awful singer." explained Rikki

"Thanks, rub it in." said Cleo

Lewis patted her back comfortingly.

"Don't worry, Cleo. I'm sure there are lots of talented singers who would give it up in a heartbeat to be able to do what you can." reassured Elijah

"Thanks Elijah." said Cleo

"So the question is, how does she know so much?" asked Lewis

"Well here's a thought; this isn't some creepy guy in a suit. This is a friendly, peaceful old lady who lives on an old boat. Think about how she would have come by this wealth of reliable mermaid knowledge." said Elijah

Lewis' eyes went wide and he shot to his feet in epiphany.

"First-hand experience! I'd bet good money that Miss Chatham is, or at least at some point was, a mermaid." stated Lewis

"Exactly. The way I see it, The moon pool bubbles up every time the full moon passes over directly overhead. That means once every month, plus blue moons. That would be 12+ full moons every year. Emma, Cleo, how old would you guess that Miss Chatham is?" asked Elijah

"I suppose 65, give or take a few years." supplied Cleo

"Right, so let's suppose that she was your age when it happened, and that she still is one now. That would be at least 600 full moons." Observed Elijah

"Hey, you're doing the science stuff. That's my job." complained Lewis

Elijah, Rikki and Emma laughed, and Cleo returned the earlier gesture of comfort while Lewis sulked.

The five of them chatted for a little longer before everyone went home to their beds.

The next day, Elijah got up to find Cleo all ready and waiting for him.

"Come on, we're supposed to meet Rikki at Emma's house." said Cleo

"Alright, I'll only be a few seconds." said Elijah

He locked himself in the bathroom, and re-emerged, literally, seconds later, all clean and ready to go.

"Wow, that was cool." said Cleo

"Yeah, I usually like to have my hot shower, but that trick always works when I'm short on time." said Elijah

The two hydrokinetics arrived at Emma's house to find everyone else already gathered together.

"Sorry we're late, it'sâ€|" she trailed off when she spotted Ms. Chatham sitting amongst Rikki, Emma and her family

"Hello Cleo." said Miss Chatham enthusiastically

"Oh, uh hi." replied Cleo nervously

Cleo looked like, well, a fish out of water. The steps she took towards Miss Chatham were as though she was walking through a minefield. She didn't know how to proceed.

"Miss Chatham, if you'll follow me, I'll show you to the guest bedroom." said Emma's Mom

"Oh, you are very kind." said Miss Chatham, as the two left the room, they heard Miss Chatham ask Emma's Mom, "Is that your natural hair colour?"

"You brought her here?" Rikki asked Emma once the four of them had the room to themselves

"What can I do? The harbor master wants to move her boat from the marina. He says she can't stay there." said Emma

"But you brought her here." said Rikki, not seeing much logic in Emma's words

"Just for a little while. I'll try to talk to the harbor master, make him see some reason." said Emma

"Emma, this woman knows about us. What if she says something to your Mom or Dad?" asked Cleo

"She won't. She's smart, and I'm sure she's discrete." defended Emma

The answering look on Rikki's face clearly displayed exactly how much confidence she had in Emma's theory; which wasn't much.

"Look, Cleo. We're probably worried about nothing. I mean, has she ever said to you 'I know you're a mermaid'?" asked Emma

"Not in those words exactly. But everything she said about the full moon turned out to be true." said Cleo

"Yeah, but remember Elijah's theory? If she was or is a mermaid, then she went through the same thing as us. Why would she want to do anything to endanger us?" asked Emma

"You're awfully quiet." commented Rikki to Elijah

"I'm just thinking. I think you're both half right. We should help her however we can. She seems like a nice old lady who is just trying to help." At Rikki's sour expression, he added, "That being said, we should also try to learn more about her." said Elijah

The four of them went up to Emma's room, and sat down in an assortment of locations.

"Look, Elijah has put forward a good theory, but we need to consider the worst: what if we're wrong and Miss Chatham does want to expose us?" asked Rikki, "All it would take is a splash of water."

"Then I will do what needs to be done. I'll stop the water with my powers." said Elijah

"No, you can't!" said Cleo

"We can't let you expose yourself for us." said Emma

"Look, I'm a loose end. I don't know anyone here, and nobody knows me. Even if the government did get involved, I'm just a guy who can do a neat trick with water. But you three are mermaids. People will look at you with greed and anger because it's not just what you can do that's special, but what you are. Not to mention that with the close friendship you have, exposing one of you will expose all of you. I can't let that happen. Not after everything you've done for me." said Elijah

His serious expression suddenly changed to a content one.

"Besides, high chances are that Emma is right and that we're worrying about nothing. I just want you to know that if the worst case scenario comes to pass, I will do everything in my power to protect you." said Elijah

"You're a good guy, you know that?" said Rikki

Elijah just smiled.

"Let's go back downstairs. We'll never know unless we try." said Emma

They began to hear the conversation in the living room as they got close.

"Not quite." Miss Chatham laughed. "Still, I couldn't get rid of the Lorelei. We had so many happy memories on her." she said

The four teenagers joined the pre-existing group, with Cleo, Elijah and Rikki on one couch, and Emma joining her Mom and brother on the other.

"Oh look, Emma's back. She knows a lot about the water." said Miss Chatham mysteriously

Elijah noticed how on edge the mermaids were, but Elliot and Emma's Mom were unaffected by the subtext. He smiled as he realized what she was doing.

"Not really, I don't swim competitively anymore." said Emma

"No, not competitively." said Miss Chatham

"You know what, I've been terribly rude. I haven't introduced our friend Elijah yet. Elijah, this is my Mom, my brother, Elliot, and Miss Chatham." said Emma

"Kim told me about you. She said you're Cleo's stray dog." said

Elliot

"Elliot! Don't be rude." scolded Emma's Mom

"But it's true. Kim told me that Cleo found him washed up on some beach, brought him home with her, and now he lives with them." said Elliot

"I am very grateful for Cleo's help, and for Mr. Sertori's generous hospitality. If Cleo hadn't found me, I'd probably be dead. After all, it wasn't just any beach she found me on. It was Mako Island." said Elijah

"Dear heavens, how on Earth did you end up there? And in the water with no boat? It's a wonder you weren't eaten by sharks." said Emma's Mom

"It's quite alright. I believe that Mako Island is a sanctuary to any true friend of the ocean." said Elijah, making direct eye contact with Miss Chatham

Now it was her turn to be surprised and slightly on edge.

"Well what about your family? Aren't they worried about you if you've gone missing?" asked Emma's Mom

"Unfortunately, with all the time I spent unconscious in the water, my long term memory is very hazy. I remember having parents, but I can't be sure if they are still alive, or who they are. Bits and pieces are coming back to me, one piece at a time, and it's just a waiting game until I can remember enough to find them." said Elijah

Elliot had the decency to look ashamed. The phone started ringing, and Emma's Mom stood up.

"It was nice meeting you, Elijah. If you'll excuse me." she said and she picked up the phone

She turned to Miss Chatham and held out the phone.

"It's for you. It's the harbor master." said Emma's Mom

"Now she's getting phone calls here." commented Rikki to Cleo

"Hello? What? But you can't. Well no, but, but you can't!" cried Miss Chatham

"What is it?" asked Emma

"They're taking my boat away from me. They say I can't use it anymore. It doesn't meet with their silly regulations. It's all I've got and they're taking it away." said Miss Chatham, sounding very desperate by the end

"Don't worry, Miss Chatham. We'll figure something out." said Emma, and she walked to the front door.

Cleo, Rikki and Elijah shared a look before following her out of the

house.

"What exactly was going on in there?" asked Rikki

"Isn't it obvious?" asked Elijah

Rikki shot him a look that said 'apparently not'.

"It was actually very clever of her. Without drawing any significant attention to you, she confirmed that none of your family know that you're mermaids." explained Elijah

"Right, because the only people who were put on edge by what she said were those of us who know the secret." said Emma

"What about what you said, about Mako Island being a sanctuary for any true friend of the ocean?" asked Cleo

"That was just me telling Miss Chatham that I could see through the little trick, and that I am completely aware of the whole mermaid situation." said Elijah

"Why would you need to tell her that?" asked Rikki

"If she is an ally to you girls, then she should know that we are on the same side. And if she was against you, then knowing that I was watching you would be a deterrent to keep her from exposing you." explained Elijah

"Yeah, but why those words?" asked Emma

"Because it's true. The more I learn about Mako Island from what you three and Lewis tell me, the more I get the feeling that me ending up at Mako Island was no coincidence. I think the island's power drew me here." said Elijah

After that, the conversation devolved into simple chatter as the four of them walked to the marina. They collected some paint supplies and made their way to where the Lorelei was still docked.

"Rikki, it's her home. We've gotta help her." said Emma in response to Rikki complaining

"You're kidding. It's a pile of junk." said Rikki

"A coat of paint will spruce it up. Now stop arguing and start painting." said Emma

"It needs more than paint. It needs a new boat." said Rikki

"Rikki being negative, what a surprise." said Emma

"Get real. We can't do this." said Rikki

"And even if you did, it wouldn't make a difference."

They turned to see the harbor master walking up.

"I know you're trying to help, but don't waste your time. The boat's got rust all through its structural framework. She's better off

without it." he said

"That is your opinion! Not mine." snapped Miss Chatham, who appeared behind him

She pushed past them.

"I'll be leaving now." said Miss Chatham

The harbor master stepped forward and grabbed her arm.

"Now you can't do that. I've referred this matter on. This boat's been impounded by the water police. It's not seaworthy." he said

"It's my home. I live here." said Miss Chatham

Emma chose this moment to intervene.

"Miss Chatham, they're just doing what they think is right. They're trying to help." she said

Miss Chatham struggled against Emma.

"I have to get my things. They're just after my treasure." she hissed the last part in Emma's ear

"Let's go back to my place and we can talk about this." said Emma, guiding Miss Chatham down the docks back to dry land

"I want what's mine. They're after my treasure. All of them." said Miss Chatham

Cleo, Rikki and Elijah pushed past Nate and Zane to follow Emma and Miss Chatham. As they passed, Elijah could hear a bit of their conversation.

"What do they mean by treasure?" asked Nate

"I have no idea." replied Zane

"So do you still think Miss Chatham is trying to expose you?" Elijah asked Rikki on the way back

Rikki sighed.

"I suppose not." she replied

After taking Miss Chatham back to Emma's house, Elijah and the girls went to meet up with Lewis. He had some interesting news to share with them.

"I looked it up, and the kind of memory loss you described isn't consistent with oxygen deprivation. It's consistent with head trauma." said Lewis

He reached up and flicked Elijah's right temple. His world exploded into pain, and he doubled over.

"Lewis, what did you do!?" cried Cleo, who had rushed to help Elijah

the second he fell

"I didn't know it would be that bad! I swear!" cried Lewis

"I'm fine. It just took me by surprise." said Elijah

"We'll need to get an x-ray done on you to figure out what's wrong." said Lewis

"How are we going to do that? Hospitals will ask questions." said Rikki

"I know. I haven't figured it all out yet." said Lewis

Later that night, the gang was invited back to Emma's house for dinner. Lewis declined on account of schoolwork he wanted to finish, and Elijah told them he would catch up with them later. He wandered up the coastline and found a nice, secluded beach with calm water. He sat down cross-legged on the beach and closed his eyes. His heart rate lowered as a sense of tranquility flowed through him in tune with the ocean. Once he was tuned in, his eyes opened. He connected with the water on a powerful level. He was a part of the ocean, and the ocean was a part of him. It responded to his thoughts and desires the way an arm or a leg would. He created a whirlpool, then inverted it into a typhoon and back again. He continued to exercise his power over water until the waning moon was directly overhead. After that, he dove into the water and shot out into deep water like a torpedo. His power over water and his ability to hold his breath for very long periods of time hypothetically put him on par with the mermaids in terms of speed and manoeuverability under water. He hadn't tested it out yet, so it was still just a theory. After swimming the coral reefs by moonlight, Elijah started to head back. He was almost back at shore, when he saw a boat coming his way. Normally he wouldn't have paid it much mind, but it was the Lorelei.

'What is Miss Chatham's boat doing all the way out here so late at night?' mused Elijah

He decided it was worth checking out. He swam up to the slow moving boat and grabbed the ladder at the back and pulled himself out of the water.

"Miss Chatham?" he called inside, not wanting to give the old woman a heart attack

She appeared in the doorway to the cabin moments later.

"Oh yes, you're one of Cleo's friends. Elijah, correct?" she asked

"That's right." he said

"How did you get onboard the Lorelei? I'm quite sure you didn't stowaway." said Miss Chatham

"I think you have an idea." said Elijah

"Yes, but I'd like to hear it from you." said Miss Chatham

"That's fair, but I have some questions for you as well. I think it

would be safe to say we can speak freely here." said Elijah

"Agreed. First I would like to know, who exactly are you?" asked Miss Chatham

"Elijah. Everything I said earlier today was true. I can't even remember my last name. I know I have a life somewhere, but I can't remember any details. I know I'm from somewhere in North America, but again I can't remember any specifics. What I didn't mention earlier, was that I didn't wash up on shore. Cleo found me in the water and dragged me out, and that I believe that I was in the water unconscious for months before I ended up here." said Elijah

"How is that possible?" asked Miss Chatham

"I believe my powers kept me alive while I was in the water. It must have manipulated the water to diffuse oxygen into my body to keep me alive, or something like that. Now I would like to know who you are and how you know so much about mermaids and the power of the full moon." said Elijah

"My name is Louise Chatham, and I became a mermaid at the age of 15 along with my two best friends, Gracie and Julia. The three of us went through many of the same challenges as Cleo, Emma and Rikki. Keeping the secret, avoiding water even though it brought us so much joy. Becoming a mermaid was the best thing that ever happened to me. I know that now, but back then it was so easy to get dragged down by all the negatives. It became too much to bear, and when the opportunity arose, we gave it up." said Miss Chatham

"How is that even possible?" asked Elijah

"We had a friend, like Cleo and the others have Lewis, and now you. Our friend was very much like Lewis. He was loyal and had a brilliant scientific mind. His theory was that planetary alignments affected the power of the moon, which is why each full moon has varying effects. He discovered a particular alignment of the planets that was particularly powerful. We entered the moon pool and we didn't transform in the water. We were mermaids no longer." said Miss Chatham

"The girls told me about how the full moon drives them to go to Mako Island. Do we need to worry about them losing their powers while moonstruck?" asked Elijah

"No that isn't a problem. You see when the full moon effects are positive, the moonlight is charged with positive energy. Most times it's just a harmless bit of positive energy, which the girls will build a tolerance to over time. Occasionally there will be a full moon saturated in positive energy, which will augment the powers of any who enter the moon pool. Those full moons are rare, but the pull is nearly impossible to avoid and even harder to try resisting. Those will happen once every few years. The full moons with negative energy are few and very far between, but powerful. You never have to worry about wandering into the moon pool on one of these full moons, because you will feel repelled from the moon pool like a positive full moon would attract you." said Miss Chatham

"Okay, that's something at least." said Elijah

"Now, tell me what you are. Judging by the fact you are soaking wet and have no tail I'm sure you aren't a mermaid." said Miss Chatham

Elijah remembered that he was soaked. He put his hands on either shoulder and willed the water from his clothes. A second later he was dry.

"I did some research, and found some fringe science papers that were published in the 70's. My power is Hydrokinesis, like Cleo. I can bend water to my will. I also have a high oxygen capacity, which means I can go long periods underwater without coming up for air. The term for exactly what I am that the scientists had come up with is Meta-Human." said Elijah

"You seem to have much in common with the girls." commented Miss Chatham

"I agree. I believe that my arrival here is no accident. I think that Mako Island drew me here." said Elijah

Elijah and Miss Chatham continued to talk through the night, into the next day. The Lorelei continued to progress slowly through the water. It was mid-morning when Elijah heard the motor of an incoming boat. He looked out the back and saw the orange of Zane's Zodiac approaching.

"You can't escape me! No one wrecks my jet ski!" yelled Zane

Miss Chatham panicked and tried to floor it, but the motor gave out and Zane boarded.

"How are you going to pay for the damages?" demanded Zane

"I don't have any money." said Miss Chatham

"That's not true. You've got treasure." said Zane

Miss Chatham seized Zane's shirt with both hands and gave him a hard stare.

"You can't have that." she said firmly

Miss Chatham let go of Zane and cried out weakly as she clutched her chest. She fell backwards, and Elijah caught her.

"What are you doing here?" Zane asked Elijah

Elijah's response was cut off by Emma and Lewis' arrival. Zane retrieved Miss Chatham's medication while Elijah and Emma helped her onto the boat.

"Come on, Zane." called Emma

"I'll catch up to you." he replied

"You better not touch any of her stuff." said Emma

"I'll grab him. You get going." said Elijah, and he climbed back on the Lorelei

He found Zane going through one of Miss Chatham's cabinets.

"What the hell are you doing?" demanded Elijah

Zane turned to look at him, but before he could speak, an explosion rocked the boat. Elijah was knocked to the side and the edge of a counter connected with the weak spot on his head. In a burst of pain, he lost consciousness. He woke up on a beach. He could hear Emma talking to Zane. His eyes opened and began scanning his surroundings. He saw beach, forest, a volcanic peak and an endless expanse of ocean. Mako Island. But what was he doing on... He shot up in a flash as the memory hit him. Zane. The Lorelei. The explosion.

"Well I saw something, and I'm gonna find out what it was." said Zane

Emma looked over and saw Elijah struggling to get up. She rushed over to help him. But in her haste to help, she forgot he was still wet, and when she tried to help him up, she got water on her arm. Her eyes went wide and she prepared to flee, but Elijah grabbed her arm and put a finger to his lips in a 'shhh' gesture. He released her arm and used his free hand to direct his powers and pull the water off her skin. The crisis was averted, and Zane was too busy preparing his Zodiac for departure to notice anything. Emma and Elijah got a ride with Zane back to the mainland, so as not to arouse suspicion. The two of them walked along together after leaving the docks.

"Thank you. For saving me." said Elijah

"I'm happy to do it. What happened down there?" asked Emma

"I don't know. I'm sure I could have gotten out of the boat while it was filling with water, but the initial explosion aggravated my head wound. I didn't wake up again until I was on the beach." said Elijah

"What are you going to do now?" asked Emma

"I'm going to go find Cleo. She's probably worried after I didn't come home last night." said Elijah

"Okay. I need to go back to the Lorelei." said Emma

"Why?"

"Treasure. See you later." said Emma deviously before running off towards the surf

Elijah walked the rest of the way to Cleo's house. The second he opened the front door, he was tackled by Cleo.

"What happened? Why didn't you come home last night? I was so worried." she barraged him with questions

"I'm alright. I'm sorry I didn't let you know, but I was out swimming and practicing my technique. Then I ended up talking with Miss Chatham on her boat until morning." Elijah went on to catch Cleo up on the events that had happened between now and when he had last seen

her. He left out the information Miss Chatham had shared with him, deciding that it should wait until all three girls and Lewis were present. But first came breakfast. Elijah was hungry, so he made himself some eggs and toast. Rikki showed up while he was eating, and he joined her and Cleo after he had cleaned up. A few hours later, they were joined by Emma and Lewis.

"So Miss Chatham definitely used to be a mermaid?" asked Lewis

"Yeah, her treasure was a locket just like the one Cleo has. It had a picture of Miss Chatham and her friends Julia and Gracie as teenagers; with tails." said Emma

"She told us after dinner that the burden of the secret was too much, and she had to give it up. What did she mean by that?" asked Cleo

"She told me that they had a friend, like you girls have Lewis, who was looking into planetary alignments. There was one that made the moon pool remove mermaid powers." said Elijah

"What kind of alignment? Is there another one soon?" asked Cleo

"Why? What would you do, jump at the opportunity? Does being a mermaid mean so little to you?" asked Elijah

"I hate lying to my family. I just want to be—"

"Be what? Normal? This thing that happened to you, and your friends, is a gift. Is being normal worth it? Because when you start sacrificing for the sake of normality, you never stop. The things you can do are amazing. But if you can't see that, you don't deserve them." said Elijah angrily

He turned and stormed out.

"Elijah, wait!" cried Cleo

"I'll go talk to him." said Rikki, and she ran out after him.

She found him sitting on the edge of the water behind Cleo's house. She walked over and dropped down next to him.

"You had it right in there." said Rikki

Elijah let out a short, abrupt laugh.

"Aren't you supposed to tell me off and drag me back inside to apologize?" asked Elijah

"Oh I will, but I don't think you were entirely wrong. I had a very similar conversation with Cleo and Emma just after we all became mermaids." said Rikki

"Really?" asked Elijah

"Yeah, it was after Cleo and Emma discovered their powers and before I discovered mine. They had these amazing powers, but they were going

on about what freak shows they were." said Rikki

"How did you handle that?" asked Elijah

"About as well as you did. I called them on it and stormed out." said Rikki

They both started laughing. Rikki stood up.

"Let's go for a swim. I want to show you something." said Rikki

She dove into the water, and Elijah quickly followed. He managed to keep sight of Rikki's tail, trailing about 20 metres behind her, though he was slowly gaining on her. They reached a landmass, which Elijah somehow knew to be Mako Island. Rikki entered an underwater cave, and he followed her. They surfaced in a pool, lit by the waning gibbous moon overhead(the stage in the moon cycle following a full moon) through the open peak of the dormant volcano. The two of them climbed out of the water onto the edge of the pool. The manoeuvre was more difficult for Rikki. A mermaid tail was a wonderful thing underwater, but until now Elijah had never contemplated how difficult it can be managing it on dry land. Rikki used her power to steam-dry herself until her legs and normal clothes reappeared. Elijah just directed all the water on his body into the pool.

"We've talked about it a lot, but this is your first time seeing the moon pool, isn't it?" asked Rikki

"Yeah it is. It's beautiful." said Elijah

"You should see it on a full moon." said Rikki

"Something tells me I'll still be here when the next one rolls around, so I think I'll have to do that." said Elijah

The pair of them just sat there for a while, just admiring the beauty of the natural formation around them.

"You're alright, you know." said Rikki

"You're not so bad yourself." said Elijah

"Thanks." said Rikki

"We should head back now. The others are probably starting to worry." said Elijah

"You're right. Wanna race?" asked Rikki

"You're on." said Elijah

"Okay. On the count of three. One, two,"

"Three!" finished Elijah, and he dove into the pool

Rikki quickly dove in after him. They sped through the ocean at top speed, and when they got back to the canal behind Cleo's house, Elijah was barely in the lead. Once dry, they stumbled into the house, laughing and holding each other up.

"Just face the facts; I won." said Elijah

"You cheated." replied Rikki

"My dear Rikki, you wound me with these accusations." said Elijah dramatically

"Looks like you two had fun." commented Emma

"Oh, you know. Nothing like a little competitive racing between friends." said Rikki

Cleo walked into the room and Elijah and Rikki calmed down.

"Look Cleo, I'm sorry about earlier." apologized Elijah

"You don't have to apologize. You were right." said Cleo

"Regardless, I shouldn't have lost it on you like that." said Elijah

"Alright, you're both sorry. Just hug already." said Rikki

Emma scolded her for her insensitivity, but they hugged anyway.

A/N: The plot changes are going to start out slow, as demonstrated in this chapter. But as Elijah becomes rooted deeper into the plot, it will change more and more.

A/N: About the fight between Cleo and Elijah, I had to establish some differences. While Elijah is very loyal to the girls, he is also very firm in his beliefs. He is not another Lewis, and will stand up to the girls. I wanted to establish his character clearly, and have the girls respect him.

End  
file.